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Department of State

TELEGRAM

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ORIGIN NEA-11

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 AF-10 ARA-11 EA-10 EUR-12 SIG-03
MMO-01 CCO-00 SS-15 PM-05 SP-02 L-03 H-01 PA-01
INR-10 INRE-00 SSO-00 NSAE-00 HA-05 MCT-02 OPR-02
OC-06 SY-05 SYE-00 A-02 PER-01 OCS-06 CA-01
FBO-05 AS-02 AID-05 IO-14 SSM-03 /155 R

DRAFTED BY NEA/P1MBHARRIS:DCS
APPROVED BY NEA/IGFSHERMAN
PA/PRS - MR. CARTER
H - MR. FLATEN IS/S-O: MR. VALERGA
SSM - MR. MC ANDREW
NEA/IAI - MR. KORN
NEA/ARN - MR. CLUVERIUS
NEA/EGY - MR. MARTINSEN
NEA/ARP - MR. TWINAM
NEA/IRN - MR. PRECHT

DEPARTMENT OF STATE A/CDC/MR

REVIEWED BY *John News* DATE *7/1/88*
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TO AMEMBASSY AMMAN IMMEDIATE
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AMEMBASSY JIDDA IMMEDIATE
AMCONSUL JERUSALEM IMMEDIATE
AMEMBASSY KATHMANDU IMMEDIATE
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PAGE 02 STATE 038900.T0SEC.041018
AMEMBASSY MANAMA IMMEDIATE

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AMEMBASSY NEW DELHI IMMEDIATE
AMEMBASSY RABAT IMMEDIATE
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AMEMBASSY TEL AVIV IMMEDIATE
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CINCEUR FOR POLAD, TEL AVIV FOR PAO, DELIVER BY 9 A.M.

E.O. 11652: N/A
SECRETARYSPARTY, PLS PASS POWELL AND SCHECTER & TRATTNER
TAGS: SOPN
ZFF4 FOR SECRETARY ONLY
SUBJECT: DEPARTMENT PRESS BRIEFING FEBRUARY 14

INFORM CONSULS

1. FOR YOUR INFORMATION AND GUIDANCE FOLLOWING ARE
EXCERPTS FROM DEPARTMENT PRESS BRIEFING FOR FEBRUARY 14,
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1979. SPOKESMAN TODAY WAS HODDING CARTER III.

MR. CARTER: I'M GOING TO DO TODAY'S BRIEFING IN TWO
PARTS. WE WILL DEAL WITH THE SITUATION IN IRAN AND, AS
YOU WISH, AFGHANISTAN. I WILL THEN GO INTO FORMAL
ANNOUNCEMENTS, AND THEN WE'LL GO INTO QUESTIONS ON THOSE
AND OTHER SUBJECTS.

SO IRAN FIRST. LET ME TRY TO GIVE YOU A SENSE OF THINGS
ON THE GROUND. I WANT TO PREPARE THIS WITH WHAT I'M SURE

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IS CLEAR TO YOU -- THAT WE HAVE ONLY FRAGMENTARY INFORMATION. WE HAVE VIRTUALLY NO COMMUNICATION DIRECTLY WITH EMBASSY PERSONNEL. WE HAVE NO SECURE COMMUNICATION WITH OUR EMBASSY. MOST OF OUR INFORMATION ON WHAT IS GOING ON IN TEHRAN IN CONNECTION WITH THE AMERICANS WHO WERE IN THE EMBASSY COMPOUND COMES FROM SECOND-HAND OR RELAYED INFORMATION THROUGH THIRD PARTIES WHO HAVE HAD DIRECT CONTACT, HOWEVER, WITH OUR AMBASSADOR AND OTHER AMERICANS.

I GIVE YOU THAT SIMPLY TO EMPHASIZE THAT CHANGING ASSESSMENTS REFLECT CHANGING INFORMATION AS IT COMES IN. WE ARE OF COURSE SEEKING TO REESTABLISH DIRECT COMMUNICATION, BUT THAT COULD TAKE SOME TIME. THERE HAS BEEN A POWER FAILURE IN THE EMBASSY. OBVIOUSLY THE EVENTS WHICH TOOK PLACE HAD SOMETHING TO DO WITH THAT.

NOW, THE LAST REPORT THAT WE HAVE HAD THROUGH THIS INDIRECT CHANNEL OF COMMUNICATION FROM AMBASSADOR SULLIVAN IS THAT ALL THE AMERICANS WHO WERE IN THE EMBASSY AT THE TIME OF THE INITIAL ASSAULT ARE NOW BACK IN THE EMBASSY COMPOUND -- THAT IS, THEY ARE ACCOUNTED FOR AND PRESENT. THE REPORTS WE HAVE ON INJURIES: (1), A MARINE WHO WAS INURED DURING THE FIGHTING WITH A HEAD INJURY AND ANOTHER MARINE WE UNDERSTAND TO HAVE A LEG INJURY. THERE WAS AT LEAST ONE IRANIAN NATIONAL WHO WORKED INSIDE THE EMBASSY

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WHO WAS KILLED. THERE MAY BE OTHERS; I SIMPLY DON'T KNOW.

O. WHEN YOU SAY THERE MAY BE OTHERS YOU MEAN IRANIANS.

A. THERE MAY BE OTHER IRANIANS. WE HAVE NO REPORTS OF AMERICANS BEING KILLED.

AND, AGAIN, WHILE I HAVE TO STRESS THE NATURE OF OUR COMMUNICATIONS -- THAT IS TO SAY, THE SPORADIC NATURE OF IT -- THE INFORMATION WE HAVE AVAILABLE FROM CONTACT THROUGH OUR CONSULATES AND OTHER PARTS OF IRAN IS THAT THERE HAVE NOT BEEN SIMILAR INCIDENTS, SUCH AS THAT WHICH OCCURRED AT THE AMERICAN EMBASSY. AND INsofar AS THE REPORTS WE HAVE ARE CONCERNED, THERE ARE NO INJURIES OR DEATHS INVOLVING AMERICANS OR SERIOUS

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INCIDENTS INVOLVING THEM ELSEWHERE IN THE COUNTRY.

INSOFAR AS PLANNING FOR DEALING WITH THE SAFETY AND SECURITY OF THE AMERICANS IN IRAN, FIRST, WE ARE CLEARLY LOOKING INTO VARIOUS APPROACHES TO DEALING WITH THAT RESPONSIBILITY. IT DOES NOT APPEAR LIKELY THAT THE AIRPORT IN TEHRAN WILL BE OPEN UNTIL SATURDAY. THERE IS A RELIGIOUS HOLIDAY BOTH TOMORROW -- WHICH IS ALMOST NOW IN IRAN -- AND ON FRIDAY, THEREBY EFFECTIVELY CLOSING THAT AVENUE. WE ARE LOOKING INTO THE ENTIRE SITUATION AND WE CLEARLY HAVE PLANS.

WE HAVE A STATEMENT THAT I WOULD LIKE TO RELAY TO YOU, WHICH CAME FROM THE CHARGE AT THE IRANIAN EMBASSY THIS

MORNING, TELEPHONED INTO THIS BUILDING TO UNDER SECRETARY NEWSOM. THE CHARGE INFORMED MR. NEWSOM THAT HE HAD
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RECEIVED A CABLE FROM FOREIGN MINISTER SANJABI STATING THAT ON SANJABI'S PART AND THAT OF PRIME MINISTER BAZARGAN AND THE AYATOLLAH KHOMEINI THAT THEY WISHES TO GIVE ASSURANCES TO SECRETARY VANCE THAT AMBASSADOR SULLIVAN AND HIS STAFF ARE SAFE AND WILL BE FULLY PROTECTED BY THE REVOLUTIONARY ARMY.

Q. WHEN DID YOU RECEIVE IT FROM IRAN?

A. THIS MORNING, WITHIN THE LAST COUPLE OF HOURS.

Q. WAS THERE ANYTHING IN THE TELEPHONE CONVERSATION THAT INDICATED THAT THE REVOLUTIONARY FORCES WISHED OR DID NOT WISH THE AMERICAN PERSONNEL, EMBASSY PERSONNEL, TO REMAIN IN IRAN?

A. NO.

Q. DO YOU HAVE ANY IDEA OF THE IDENTIFICATION OR POLITICAL PERSUASION OF THE PEOPLE WHO ATTACKED THE EMBASSY?

A. I WANT TO BE FAIRLY CAREFUL ABOUT THIS IN THAT WE DO NOT HAVE A CLEAR PICTURE OF WHO WAS INVOLVED. FROM THE REPORTS WE HAVE, HOWEVER, IT SEEMS THAT THOSE DIRECTLY

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INVOLVED IN THAT INITIAL ASSAULT WERE LEFT MARXIST GROUPS. AS TO ORGANIZATIONAL IDENTITY, I THINK IT'S TOO EARLY FOR ME TO TRY TO DEAL WITH THAT.

Q. A TASS ACCOUNT SAYS THAT THE EMBASSY WAS ATTACKED AFTER -- I DON'T HAVE THE EXACT WORDING HERE BUT SOMETHING ABOUT AFTER THE WORD HAD GONE AROUND THAT SAVAK AGENTS WERE BEING HARBORED INSIDE THE EMBASSY. DO YOU HAVE ANY ACCOUNT OF THIS VERSION OF WHY THE EMBASSY WAS ATTACKED?

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A. I'VE SEEN THAT VERSION. I CAN ONLY COMMENT THAT THAT KIND OF RUMOR HAD BEEN PASSED AROUND BEFORE. IT WAS WRONG. THERE WERE NO SAVAK AGENTS INSIDE.

Q. HAVE ANY AMERICAN INSTALLATIONS, TO YOUR KNOWLEDGE, BEEN USED TO HARBOR FORMER SAVAK AGENTS?

A. NOT TO MY KNOWLEDGE.

Q. DID THE SECRETARY RESPOND TO THE MESSAGE OF THE AYATOLLAH AND SANJABI?

A. THIS WAS RECEIVED AFTER THE SECRETARY LEFT. I WANT TO TELL YOU OUR DIFFICULTIES RIGHT NOW IN CORRESPONDING DIRECTLY. BUT, AS I SAID THIS MORNING, AT THE TIME OF THE RELIEF OF THE AMERICAN COMPOUND BY FORCES REPRESENTING THE PROVISIONAL GOVERNMENT, WE OF COURSE WELCOMED THAT ACTION.

Q. DO YOU KNOW IF THE PROTECTION THAT'S BEING OFFERED INVOLVES GUARDING THE EMBASSY AND GUARDING THE AMBASSADOR OR OTHERS ON THEIR WAY TO AND FROM? WHAT DO YOU INTERPRET IT TO MEAN?

A. MY UNDERSTANDING IS THAT THERE ARE FORCES REPRESENTING THE PROVISIONAL GOVERNMENT WHICH ARE OUTSIDE AND AROUND THE EMBASSY GUARDING IT FROM A REPETITION OF WHAT OCCURRED EARLIER.

Q. WHAT IS YOUR UNDERSTANDING OF WHAT KIND OF PROTECTION, IF ANY, THE REVOLUTIONARY ARMY HAD GIVEN THE

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EMBASSY BEFORE THE INCIDENT AND THE TIME OF THE INCIDENT,
SINCE, AS WE ALL KNOW, THE SITUATION WAS TERRIBLY
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UNSTABLE? HAD THE REVOLUTIONARY ARMY DONE ANYTHING FOR
YOU UNTIL IT HAPPENED?

A. I DON'T KNOW.

Q. IS THE REVOLUTIONARY ARMY, AS YOU UNDERSTAND IT, THE
OLD ARMY OF IRAN OR ARE THESE DIFFERENT FORCES?

A. I BELIEVE THESE TO BE, FOR THE MOST PART, FOLLOWERS
OF THE NEW REGIME WHO, I WOULD HAVE TO SAY -- I WILL HAVE
TO GO ON BACKGROUND TO USE THE TERM -- BUT ARE
IRREGULARS AS OPPOSED TO UNITS OF MILITARY MEN IN THE
UNIFORM OF THE OLD REGIME.

Q. DO YOU KNOW WHAT HAS HAPPENED TO THE LATTER? WHAT'S
HAPPENED TO THE IRANIAN ARMY?

A. NO. I DON'T HAVE ANY DESCRIPTION ON THAT.

Q. DO YOUR REPORTS INDICATE WHETHER OR NOT ANY SENSITIVE
MATERIALS WERE LOST WHILE THE EMBASSY WAS UNDER THE
CONTROL OF THE PEOPLE WHO ATTACKED IT?

A. IT IS MY UNDERSTANDING THAT NONE WERE.

Q. WERE THEY DESTROYED THEN?

A. IT IS MY UNDERSTANDING THAT ADEQUATE SECURITY

MEASURES WERE TAKEN TO DEAL WITH THE POSSIBILITY OF
ENDANGERING THEM BEFORE THE BUILDINGS WERE SEIZED.

Q. WHAT CAN YOU TELL US ABOUT THE COMMUNICATIONS THAT
WE'VE HAD CONCERNING AMBASSADOR SULLIVAN AND HIS STAFF?
YOU SAY THAT THESE ARE SECOND-PARTY AND SECOND-HAND
COMMUNICATIONS. ARE WE RELYING MAINLY ON IRANIANS
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RELAYING CONVERSATIONS WITH SULLIVAN?

A. NO. LET ME DESCRIBE THE WAY IT'S DONE. THERE HAS BEEN AN UNSECURE TELEPHONE CALL OR TWO FROM AMERICANS WHO WERE OUTSIDE THE EMBASSY, CALLING HERE TRYING TO DESCRIBE WHAT THEY HAD SEEN.

Q. ARE THESE EMBASSY PEOPLE?

A. YES. THERE HAS BEEN A RELAY BY DIPLOMATS OF OTHER NATIONS WHO HAVE COME INTO THE COMPOUND, TALKED TO AMBASSADOR SULLIVAN AND OTHERS, AND COME OUT AND RELAYED FROM HIM ACCOUNTS OF WHAT HAS BEEN GOING ON. THOSE ARE THE BASIC FORMS OF COMMUNICATION.

Q. DO YOU HAVE ANY EXPECTATION THAT THE SECURE LINES AND THE COMMUNICATION SYSTEM CAN BE RESTORED OR HAS IT BEEN WRECKED OR IS IT OUT BECAUSE OF THE POWER FAILURE OR WHAT?

A. I HAVE SOME DIFFICULTY IN GIVING YOU ANY KIND OF PREDICTION ON THAT.

Q. FOR THE RECORD, I TAKE IT YOU OR THE U.S. GOVERNMENT DOES NOT HOLD THE PROVISIONAL GOVERNMENT RESPONSIBLE FOR THE ATTACK.

A. I DON'T THINK AT THIS POINT I HAVE ANY KIND OF COMMENT ON RESPONSIBILITY. I CAN ONLY DESCRIBE THE EVENTS RIGHT NOW, WHICH WE ARE BARELY ABLE TO KEEP UP WITH.

Q. DO YOU HAVE ANY ACCOUNT OF HOW THAT IRANIAN DIED?

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A. THE ONLY ACCOUNT THAT I HAVE, IN FACT, IS FROM THE MARINE WHO WAS INJURED, WHO DESCRIBED IT FOR AT LEAST ONE WIRE SERVICE REPORTER.

Q. THAT'S ALL?

A. WELL, THAT'S ALL I CAN TELL YOU AS FAR AS THE DETAILS. I UNDERSTAND FROM ANOTHER SOURCE THAT HE WAS, IN FACT,

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KILLED.

Q. KILLED?

A. BUT HOW HE DIED I DON'T KNOW.

Q. ONE WIRE SERVICE SAYS THAT THE MARINES OPENED FIRE AND THE THREE URBAN GUERRILLAS, AS THEY'RE DESCRIBED IN THE STORY, WERE KILLED. DOES THE STATE DEPARTMENT HAVE ANY INFORMATION THAT ANY OF THE ATTACKERS WERE KILLED OR, IN FACT, THE MARINES WERE PERMITTED TO DEFEND THE EMBASSY?

A. NO. LET ME SAY INsofar AS OUR OPENING FIRE IS CONCERNED, I HAVE NO INFORMATION THAT WOULD VERIFY ANY SUCH REPORT THAT THIS WAS PROMPTED BY OUR OPENING FIRE FIRST. SECOND, INsofar AS TRYING TO GIVE YOU AN ACCURATE PICTURE, A BATTLEFRONT ASSESSMENT, A BODY COUNT -- ANYTHING LIKE THAT -- I CAN'T. I DON'T HAVE IT.

Q. YOU MEAN YOU DON'T KNOW EITHER WAY IF THREE GUYS, IF THREE OF THEM, WERE KILLED?

A. NO, I DO NOT KNOW.

Q. AT ONE POINT THE LEFT WING FORCES -- HOWEVER YOU WANT TO DESCRIBE THEM -- CONTROLLED THE EMBASSY. THEN MY UNDERSTANDING IS THAT KHOMEINI'S FORCES TOOK CONTROL OF THE EMBASSY. FOR HOW LONG DID KHOMEINI'S PEOPLE
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RETAIN CONTROL? IS THE UNITED STATES ONCE AGAIN IN COMPLETE CONTROL OF ITS OWN EMBASSY COMPOUND?

A. I DO NOT KNOW FOR A FACT WHETHER THERE ARE ANY FORCES LEFT INSIDE THOSE GROUNDS REPRESENTING THE PROVISIONAL GOVERNMENT. I DON'T KNOW.

Q. WHAT ABOUT THE BUILDINGS? FOR HOW LONG WERE THOSE BUILDINGS UNDER AMERICAN CONTROL?

A. THERE WAS A PERIOD, WHICH I DO NOT HAVE A FIX ON, WHEN THE ATTACKERS WERE IN THERE. WE UNDERSTAND THAT THE CHANCELLERY IS SO BADLY TANK-BASTED THAT IT IS NOT USABLE AT THIS TIME... THERE WAS, BY THE INITIAL WAVE OF ATTACKERS,

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SOME ACTS OF PILLAGING OF THE AMBASSADOR'S RESIDENCE. BUT I JUST DON'T KNOW AT THIS POINT HOW LONG, IN FACT, ONCE THE FOLLOWERS OF THE PROVISIONAL GOVERNMENT CAME BACK IN -- HOW LONG THEY WERE INSIDE THOSE BUILDINGS OR WHAT THE STATUS IS RIGHT NOW.

I WAS JUST HANDED A NOTE. I THOUGHT I SAID THIS, BUT ON THE QUESTION OF THE RESPONSIBILITY FOR THE ATTACK, WE CLEARLY HAVE STATED THAT THE GOVERNMENT NOT ONLY WASN'T

RESPONSIBLE FOR THE ATTACK BUT THAT THE GOVERNMENT ACTED QUICKLY AND EFFICIENTLY TO TRY TO DEAL WITH THE ATTACKERS AND TO GET THEM OUT OF THERE. AND I WANT TO REEMPHASIZE THAT.

Q. DO YOU HAVE ANYTHING MORE ABOUT THE AMERICANS WHO WERE TAKEN FROM THE COMPOUND DURING THE SEIGE?

A. THEY ARE BACK. NO, I DON'T.

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Q. WELL, HOW WERE THEY TAKEN? HOW MANY OF THEM?

A. I DON'T KNOW.

Q. HOW MANY OF THEM?

A. LET ME TELL YOU SOMETHING. I AM NOT GOING TO BE MUCH HELP TO YOU FOR A WHILE ON NUMBERS. AMONG THE REASONS I AM NOT GOING TO BE MUCH HELP TO YOU ON NUMBERS IS I WOULD JUST AS SOON NOT PLAY THE "BUT, HODDING, TWO HOURS AGO YOU SAID THAT THERE WERE TEN PEOPLE TAKEN AWAY AND NOW YOU SAY THERE WERE FIFTEEN." THE FACT IS THAT THE INFORMATION CHANGES SO FAST THAT I THINK IT IS SORT OF IRRELEVANT. THEY WERE TAKEN AWAY, THEY ARE BACK.

Q. ON THE QUESTION OF EVACUATION, DO I UNDERSTAND YOU TO BE SAYING THAT UNTIL SATURDAY, AT LEAST, THERE IS NO POSSIBILITY OF FLYING PLANES IN.

A. THAT SEEMS TO BE THE CASE.

Q. WHAT ABOUT THE POSSIBILITY OF FLYING HELICOPTERS IN?

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A. I THINK THAT I WOULD HAVE TO SAY FOR ALL OF THEM THAT THE LIKELIHOOD OF BEING ABLE TO DO ANYTHING BEFORE SATURDAY IS NON-EXISTENT TO VERY LITTLE.

LET ME SAY SOMETHING HERE ON BACKGROUND. THERE IS SOME ILLUSION ABOUT WHAT THOSE HELICOPTERS WERE GOING TO BE CAPABLE OF DOING IN ANY CASE. THOSE HELICOPTERS HAVE A CAPACITY TO PICK UP PEOPLE AND TAKE THEM A DISTANCE, AS FROM A LOCATION POINT TO A TRANSPORTATION POINT, NOT TO DO TRANSCONTINENTAL FERRYING OF FIVE, SIX, SEVEN THOUSAND AMERICANS. THEY WERE TO GET OVER TRAFFIC OBSTACLES IN A CITY FROM A LOCATION POINT TO A

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POINT WHERE THE TRANSPORTS WOULD COME IN. THAT IS THE WAY IT IS.

Q. DO YOU HAVE ANYTHING ON AIRPORTS ELSEWHERE IN THE COUNTRY?

Q. EFFECTIVELY, THERE IS NOTHING THAT YOU ARE SAYING THAT IS POSSIBLE BETWEEN NOW AND SATURDAY, TO ALL INTENTS AND PURPOSES.

A. I AM NOT AWARE OF ANYTHING AT THIS TIME.

Q. HAVE YOU RECEIVED FROM THE NEW GOVERNMENT ASSURANCES THAT WHEN THE AIRPORTS ARE OPEN THAT YOU WILL BE ABLE TO FLY PLANES IN TO GET AMERICANS OUT?

A. WE HAVE REASON TO BELIEVE THAT WE WILL BE ABLE TO MOVE THOSE AMERICANS OUT WHO WISH TO LEAVE AND WE FEEL SHOULD LEAVE.

Q. AS A RESULT OF ASSURANCES FROM THE GOVERNMENT?

A. WE HAVE REASON TO BELIEVE THAT, YES.

Q. THE IRANIAN AIR FORCE HAS TWO FIELDS AT ISFAHAN, I BELIEVE, AND AT LEAST ONE AT SHIRAZ, TO WHICH THERE HAS PREVIOUSLY BEEN ACCESS BY AMERICAN FORCES. DO YOU HAVE ANYTHING ON THOSE?

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A. NO. I CAN'T EVEN SUGGEST. I DON'T KNOW THE ANSWER.

Q. COULD YOU COMMENT ON THE HAROLD BROWN COMMENTS WHICH
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WERE REPORTED ON ONE SERVICE AS SAYING THAT AMERICAN
PLANES WOULD FLY INTO IRAN TO TAKE AMERICANS OUT WHO
WANTED TO LEAVE, AS SOON AS THE AIRPORT IS OPEN.

A. THAT IS WHAT I JUST GOT THROUGH SAYING.

Q. HAVE YOU LOST CONTACT WITH THE EMBASSY?

A. WAIT, NOW.

Q. I WOULD LIKE TO FOLLOW THIS LITTLE DIVERSION OF
WHATEVER NUMBER IT WAS THAT WAS TAKEN TO THE UNIVERSITY.
DO YOU HAVE ANY REPORTING THAT YOU CAN SHARE WITH US
ON THE PURPOSE OF THAT? WHY WERE THEY TAKEN THERE? WHAT
HAPPENED TO THEM WHILE THEY WERE THERE?

A. I AM NOT EVEN PERSONALLY ABLE TO VERIFY THE
LOCATIONS WHERE VARIOUS PEOPLE WERE TAKEN. I PERSONALLY
CAN'T. I HAVE SEEN A LOT OF REPORTS. THE COMPLEXITY
OF THE REPORTING AND THE SPORADIC NATURE OF IT IS SUCH
THAT I AM NOT GOING TO TRY TO CONFIRM THAT THEY WERE

TAKEN TO THIS PLACE OR TO THAT PLACE OR ANYWHERE ELSE
UNTIL I KNOW A LOT MORE THAN I KNOW. BECAUSE I HAVE
SEEN SOME WEIRD REPORTS COME OUT OF THERE WHICH WERE
CONTRADICTORY WITHIN THEMSELVES.

Q. DO YOU KNOW THE IDENTITY OF ANY OF THE PEOPLE THAT
WERE TAKEN OUT OF THE EMBASSY COMPOUND?

A. THE IDENTITY?

Q. YES.

A. I WON'T BE ABLE TO GIVE IDENTITY.

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A. LOOK, AS I SAID THIS MORNING, AND THIS IS AS FAR AS I AM GOING TO GO ON THIS, THAT WE ARE IN TOUCH, WE ARE PLANNING, WE ARE TAKING INTO ACCOUNT THE NEED FOR THE SAFETY AND SECURITY OF OUR CITIZENS THERE. WE WILL TAKE SUCH STEPS AS WE THINK ARE NECESSARY TO INSURE THE SAFETY OF THE AMERICAN COMMUNITY. AS I SAID IN THIS MORNING'S BRIEFING, AS TO WHETHER THAT INVOLVES COMPLETE, PARTIAL, OR ANY OTHER KIND OF EVACUATION, WHICH IS THE LAST QUESTION I WAS ASKED THIS MORNING, AND THE ANSWER IS STILL THE SAME. THE FORM OF WHAT WE ARE GOING TO DO IS WHAT IS UNDER DISCUSSION NOW. WHAT WE WILL DO WILL BE TAKEN IN LIGHT OF THE EVENTS AND THE CIRCUMSTANCES AS WE SEE THEM AT THE TIME THAT WE ARE ABLE TO MOVE FORWARD. AND I DON'T HAVE A DIRECT ANSWER TO THAT.

Q. YOU SAID EARLIER THAT WHEN THE PLANES WILL FLY IN, WHEN THE AIRPORT IS OPEN, YOU HAVE REASON TO BELIEVE THAT THOSE AMERICANS WHO WANT TO LEAVE WILL BE ABLE TO LEAVE AND SHOULD LEAVE. CORRECT?

A. IF THEY WANT TO LEAVE.

Q. YOU ARE NOT SUGGESTING, I MEAN, THAT THE EMBASSY PEOPLE ARE GOING TO BE PULLED OUT? THAT IS NOT WHAT YOU MEANT TO SAY, IS IT?

A. I WILL SAY THIS, THAT INSOFAR AS THE EMBASSY AND OFFICIAL PERSONNEL ARE CONCERNED, WE ARE IN SO-CALLED PHASE III IN WHICH THE AMBASSADOR HAS DETERMINED AND HAD LIMITED OFFICIAL USE LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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DETERMINED THAT EVERYTHING EXCEPT STRICTLY ESSENTIAL PERSONNEL SHOULD COME OUT, AND THAT HE AND HIS STAFF WILL DESIGNATE WHO ESSENTIAL PERSONNEL MIGHT BE.

Q. DO YOU HAVE ANY IDEA WHAT NUMBERS THAT WILL BE?

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A. NO, I DON'T YET.

Q. DO YOU HAVE ANY INDICATION THAT THERE ARE ANY AMERICAN CITIZENS IN IRAN THAT THE IRANIAN, NEW IRANIAN GOVERNMENT WILL NOT ALLOW TO LEAVE?

A. NO.

Q. I UNDERSTAND THAT THERE ARE TWO EMPLOYEES OF A COMPANY, H. ROSS PIERROT'S FIRM, CALLED "ELECTRONIC DATA SYSTEMS", THAT WERE SUPPOSEDLY BEING HELD UNDER RANSOM BY ONE OF THE OLD IRANIAN REGIMES. DO YOU HAVE ANY WORD ON THAT, WHAT HAS HAPPENED TO THOSE TWO PEOPLE?

A. I WILL HAVE TO TAKE THAT. I DON'T KNOW.

Q. DO YOU HAVE ANYTHING, EITHER WAY, ON HAM RADIO REPORTS THAT WE HAVE NOW RECEIVED FROM TWO DIFFERENT STATES FROM AMERICANS IN IRAN SAYING THEY ARE SUBJECT TO HOUSE-TO-HOUSE SEARCHES BY THE SAME SORT OF RADICAL ELEMENTS THAT TOOK OVER THE EMBASSY WITH DEMANDS THAT THEY GIVE UP ANY WEAPONS THEY HAVE, WITH DEMANDS THAT THEY SURRENDER RADIOS?

A. NO, BUT I AM NOT GOING TO TRY TO ARGUE WITH IT. I UNDERSTAND THE QUESTION, AND THAT IS WHY I WAS VERY CAREFUL WHEN I WAS SAYING THAT INSOFAR AS REPORTING OUT IN THE FIELD IS CONCERNED, I CAN ONLY GIVE YOU WHAT THEY HAVE, WITHOUT FOR A MINUTE SUGGESTING TO YOU THAT
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WE KNOW FOR A FACT AND A CERTAINTY WHAT THE SITUATION IS WITH ALL AMERICANS ALL OVER THAT COUNTRY. I CAN'T CONFIRM THAT, BUT I ALSO CAN'T SIT HERE AND SAY FLATLY THAT I KNOW THAT TO BE UNTRUE, BECAUSE I DON'T.

Q. IS THERE ANYTHING YOU CAN GIVE US TODAY ON ANY COUNTRY WHICH MIGHT BE WILLING TO HELP THE UNITED STATES LAUNCH AN EVACUATION? SPECIFICALLY, WHAT IS THE SITUATION WITH TURKEY, OR, FOR EXAMPLE, GREECE OR ISRAEL? WOULD THEY BE WILLING TO HELP?

A. AGAIN, I AM NOT GOING TO GO INTO ANY OF THE CONTIN-

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Q. WHAT KIND OF A BREAKDOWN DO YOU HAVE NOW ON THE AMERICAN WHO ARE REMAINING IN IRAN IN TERMS OF WHO THEY ARE WORKING FOR -- GOVERNMENT, PRIVATE COMPANIES, WHERE THEY ARE PHYSICALLY IN IRAN, AND SO FORTH?

A. I THINK WE HAVE A PRETTY GOOD NOTION OF IT.

Q. IS THIS INFORMATION THAT YOU ARE ABLE TO GIVE US AT LEAST IN TERMS OF HOW MANY PEOPLE WORK FOR PRIVATE COMPANIES, HOW MANY ARE CONSIDERED DEPENDENTS, ETC.?

A. I DON'T KNOW. I WILL TAKE THAT WHOLE SET OF QUESTIONS. BUT I HAVE A FEELING THAT RIGHT THROUGH HERE WE MAY NOT BE REALLY GOING OUT THERE AND PUTTING PEOPLE ON THE LIMITED OFFICIAL USE
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MAP FOR OTHER PEOPLE TO DIDDLE WITH.

Q. DO YOU HAVE ANY DIRECT CONTACT FROM HERE TO IRAN WITH THE SANJABI OR THE AYATOLLAH OR ANYONE OF THEM?

A. RIGHT IN THROUGH HERE, WE HAVE HAD A NUMBER OF CONTACTS. AS TO HOW IT IS TAKING PLACE, I HAVE GIVEN YOU ONE EXAMPLE, WHICH IS THE COMMUNICATION WITH MR. NEWSOM. THERE ARE A NUMBER OF THINGS THAT HAVE BEEN SOMEWHAT HELD UP BECAUSE OF THE EVENTS IN THE EMBASSY.

Q. WHO IS THE CHARGE THAT YOU HEARD FROM THIS MORNING?

A. THE SAME PERSON I SAID BEFORE, HOMAYOUN.

Q. THE SITUATION IN THE EMBASSY IS ALSO A LITTLE BIT FLUID, LIKE THE FELLOW WHO YESTERDAY SAID HE WAS IN CHARGE OF DIPLOMATIC SERVICES FOR KHOMEINI. TODAY APPARENTLY ISN'T ANY MORE. SO, THERE IS AN APPROPRIATE QUESTION. HAVE WE TRIED TO DEAL DIRECTLY WITH THE REGIME IN TEHRAN? IS THERE ENOUGH TO DO THAT?

A. HOMAYOUN IS IN CHARGE. HE IS RELAYING INFORMATION AND MESSAGES FROM HIS REGIME.

Q. BUT TO ME ALL THAT THAT YOU ARE DOING IS YOU ARE WAITING FOR HOMAYOUN TO RELAY THE MESSAGES. YOU DON'T GO AHEAD WITH THAT?

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A. WE ARE WORKING IN A NUMBER OF WAYS TO TRY TO EFFECT THE SAFETY AND SECURITY OF AMERICANS, AND I AM NOT REALLY GOING TO GO THROUGH ALL OF THEM.

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Q. I KNOW YOU DON'T LIKE TO USE THE WORD "EVACUATION", BUT EARLIER WHEN SOMEONE MENTIONED BROWN'S STATEMENT, YOU GAVE THE INDICATION THAT WHEN THE AIRPORT DID OPEN POSSIBLY ON SATURDAY, WE WOULD WANT TO MOVE IN THERE AND MOVE THOSE PEOPLE WHO WANTED TO GET OUT. BUT NOW YOU SEEM TO BE HEDGING A LITTLE BIT ON PRECISELY WHAT WE MIGHT WANT TO DO.

A. NO. I WAS BEING ASKED A MORE FORMAL QUESTION AS TO WHETHER WE ISSUE ORDERS, AS TO WHETHER WE IMPLEMENT CERTAIN KINDS OF LANGUAGE WHICH SETS THINGS INTO TRAIN. WHAT I WAS TRYING TO DO WAS SAY I AM NOT GOING TO GO INTO THAT KIND OF A CONTINGENCY.

CLEARLY WE WANT TO MAKE THE POSSIBILITY OF EVACUATION AVAILABLE TO A LOT OF PEOPLE, BOTH THOSE WHO WE OFFICIALLY ORDER OUT AND OTHERS WHO MAY FEEL THAT THEY SHOULD OR THAT THEY WANT TO OR THAT WE MAY DECIDE, WE WOULD URGE TO. I AM JUST NOT GOING TO TRY TO PREJUDGE WHAT WE ARE GOING TO DO, THAT'S ALL.

Q. DO YOU INTEND TO ESTABLISH THE NATURE OF THE RADICAL GROUPS AND THE LIKELY IMPACT THEY MIGHT HAVE IN FOLLOW-UP OPERATIONS WHICH MIGHT BE EXPECTED FROM THEM? HAVE YOU COME UP WITH ANY EVIDENCE THAT THERE IS A LINK HERE BETWEEN THESE ACTIONS AND THE CONTINUING BROADCASTS ALONG THE SOVIET-IRANIAN BORDERS FROM THOSE STATIONS WHICH SOMETIME AGO WERE A BONE OF CONTENTION?

A. I DON'T HAVE ANY ASSESSMENT AT THIS POINT TO OFFER YOU ON ANY LINKS UNTIL I HAVE A MUCH BETTER ASSESSMENT TO OFFER YOU ON WHAT HAS HAPPENED.

Q. ARE YOU STILL MONITORING THOSE BROADCASTS, AND WOULD YOU CONTINUE TO SAY THAT THEY WERE UNHELPFUL, AS YOU SAID AT THE TIME OF THE SHAH'S PRESENCE IN THE COUNTRY?

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A. LET'S SEE. IF I DON'T SAY YES, THEY WE ARE GETTING SOFT ON RADICAL BROADCASTS. IF I DO SAY YES, THEN I AM ASKED HOW COME YOU ARE SO HELPLESS IN DOING ANYTHING ABOUT THOSE RADICAL BROADCASTS. OF COURSE WE ARE CONCERNED ABOUT ANYTHING WHICH EXACERBATES THE SITUATION IN IRAN AND ENDANGERS THE SECURITY OF AMERICANS.

Q. WHAT EXACERBATES THE SITUATION?

A. ANYTHING WHICH EXACERBATES IT, WE ARE AGAINST. ANYTHING THAT TASTES LIKE APPLE PIE, WE ARE FOR.

Q. GETTING BACK TO THE PRECAUTIONARY PLANS WHICH WERE ANNOUNCED ON SUNDAY, DID YOU GET SOME TYPE OF ASSURANCES FROM THE PROVISIONAL GOVERNMENT WHICH LED YOU TO CONCLUDE NOT TO PROCEED WITH THE EVACUATION?

A. NOT TO PROCEED WITH THE EVACUATION? WE DIDN'T HAVE PLANES GOING IN THERE BECAUSE THEY AIRPORT WASN'T OPEN. WE DIDN'T CANCEL FLIGHTS.

Q. I'M REFERRING TO THE HELICOPTERS.

A. LET ME SAY AGAIN WHAT I JUST TRIED TO EXPLAIN TO YOU ABOUT THE HELICOPTERS -- THIS IS ON BACKGROUND: QUIT THINKING OF BUCK ROGERS HELICOPTERS TAKING THOUSANDS OF AMERICANS OUT OF IRAN. WHAT THE HELICOPTERS WERE FOR WAS TO GET OVER ROADBLOCKS AND OTHER OBSTACLES BETWEEN GROUPS OF AMERICANS IN ONE PLACE AND THE AIRPORT IN ANOTHER.

Q. YOU TERMED THE INVADERS OF THE COMPOUND AS, I
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BELIEVE, "LEFTISTS." CAN YOU TELL US WHAT THAT CHARACTERIZATION IS BASED ON? IS IT BASED ON THINGS THEY SAID TO EMBASSY PERSONNEL, AND CAN YOU TELL US THAT WHILE THEY HAVE THE COMPOUND, DID THEY MAKE SPECIFIC DEMANDS? DID THEY SAY WHY THEY WERE THERE?

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A. I DON'T HAVE ANYTHING MORE ON THAT RIGHT NOW. I WOULDN'T WANT TO TRY TO ANSWER THAT WHOLE SET OF CONVERSATIONS UNTIL THE AMBASSADOR HAS SOME WAY TO REPORT TO US VERY COMPLETELY AND DIRECTLY. THE NATURE OF OUR COMMUNICATION NOW IS THAT HE IS TRYING TO GET ESSENTIAL INFORMATION TO US THROUGH THESE INDIRECT CHANNELS. THAT IS NOT IMMEDIATELY ESSENTIAL.

Q. BUT IS THE CHARACTERIZATION BASED ON WHAT THE IRANIAN PROVISIONAL GOVERNMENT HAS TOLD US ABOUT THE NATURE OF THESE PEOPLE OR ON WHAT THE INVADERS SAID?

A. IT IS BASED ON SEVERAL SOURCES, INCLUDING WHAT COME OF OUR PEOPLE INSIDE HAVE INDICATED TO THOSE WHO HAVE SEEN THEM.

Q. IS IT CORRECT THEY WERE CLAIMING TO BE SUPPORTERS OF KHOMEINI?

A. I'M JUST REALLY NOT SURE ENOUGH ABOUT ALL THE THINGS THEY SAID. I DON'T WANT TO TRY TO DEAL WITH THAT BECAUSE I DON'T KNOW.

Q. CAN YOU GIVE US YOUR READOUT ON AFGHANISTAN, PLEASE?

A. ALL RIGHT. YOU HAVE MY STATEMENT THIS MORNING. O.K. LET ME GO BEYOND THAT. RATHER THAN RUNNING THROUGH A SET OF QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS WHICH MAY OR MAY NOT HAVE BEEN ANTICIPATED, LET ME TRY TO PARAPHRASE THE INFORMATION I HAVE HERE AND THEN GO TO YOUR QUESTIONS.
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INSOFAR AS RESPONSIBILITY IS CONCERNED, THE TERRORISTS BEAR THE RESPONSIBILITY FOR SETTING IN MOTION THE EVENTS

LEADING TO THE TRAGIC DEATH OF THE AMBASSADOR. THE AFGHAN AUTHORITIES DID MOVE PROMPTLY TO SURROUND THE HOTEL. WE DO NOT KNOW IF THEY SOUGHT TO NEGOTIATE WITH THE TERRORISTS, ALTHOUGH OUR DCM WAS INFORMED THAT THEY WERE IN CONSTANT CONTACT WITH THE ABDUCTORS OF THE AMBASSADOR. WHAT WE DO KNOW IS THAT THEY RUSHED THE HOTEL ROOM, DESPITE OUR STRONG REQUEST THAT FORCE

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NOT BE USED. WE ARE DEEPLY DISTRESSED THAT THE AFGHAN GOVERNMENT DID NOT CHOOSE TO HEED THAT REQUEST. WE HAVE PROTESTED TO THAT GOVERNMENT.

DEPUTY CHIEF OF MISSION J. BRUCE AMSTUTZ TOLD DEPUTY FOREIGN MINISTER DOST OF OUR REACTION IN THE STRONGEST POSSIBLE TERMS, AND HE WAS FULLY AUTHORIZED TO DO SO. OUR REQUEST THAT THEY USE EXTREME DISCRETION IN DEALING WITH THE AMBASSADOR'S ABDUCTORS WAS SENT EARLY THIS MORNING. THE SECRETARY WAS DIRECTLY INVOLVED IN SENDING THESE MESSAGES REQUESTING THAT THE AFGHAN GOVERNMENT TAKE NO ACTION WHICH MIGHT JEOPARDIZE THE AMBASSADOR'S LIFE. THEY WERE CONVEYED BY MR. AMSTUTZ TO MR. DOST FOR RELAY TO PRESIDENT TERAKI AND FOREIGN MINISTER AMIN.

WE DID NOT RECEIVE AN ANSWER TO THAT REQUEST, NOR DID WE HAVE ANY ADVANCE NOTICE THAT THEY INTENDED TO RUSH THE HOTEL ROOM IN THE HOTEL KABUL.

WE HAVE NO INFORMATION INDEPENDENT OF REPORTING THAT YOU HAVE SEEN AS TO THE IDENTITY OF THE TERRORISTS. THE
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AFGHAN AUTHORITIES HAVE STATED THAT THEY WERE ANTI-GOVERNMENT TERRORISTS WHO DEMANDED THE RELEASE OF POLITICAL PRISONERS. I HAVE TO REPEAT THAT WE HAVE NO CONFIRMED INFORMATION BEYOND THESE REPORTS.

THE SITUATION IN KABUL APPEARS TO BE QUIET. WE HAVE INSTRUCTED OUR EMBASSY THERE TO TAKE PRECAUTIONS AND ALERT AMERICAN PERSONNEL AND AMERICAN CITIZENS. THERE ARE ABOUT 350 AMERICAN OFFICIALS AND DEPENDENTS IN AFGHANISTAN. WE DO NOT HAVE ANY WAY OF KNOWING HOW MANY OTHER AMERICANS ARE THERE NOW.

THE AMBASSADOR'S FUNERAL ARRANGEMENTS ARE BEING ESTABLISHED NOW. THE WHITE HOUSE HAS ORDERED THAT A SPECIAL PLANE BE SENT TO KABUL TO BRING THE AMBASSADOR'S BODY HOME. I WOULD POINT YOU TO STATEMENTS BY THE SECRETARY OF STATE AND THE PRESIDENT OF THE UNITED STATES ON THIS. ALSO A PERSONAL OBSERVATION BY AN OLD FRIEND AND FORMER TEACHER, MARSHALL SHULMAN.

WE HAVE ASKED THE EMBASSY FOR A FULL REPORT ON THE
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INCIDENT. AS OF NOW, OUR INFORMATION IS FAIRLY LIMITED.

KABUL RADIO HAS ANNOUNCED THAT FOUR TERRORISTS INVOLVED IN THE INCIDENT WERE KILLED BY THE POLICE. I AM NOT ABLE TO EITHER CONFIRM OR DENY REPORTS INVOLVING THE POSSIBLE INVOLVEMENT OR PRESENCE OF SOVIET ADVISERS OR PERSONNEL IN THE INCIDENT LEADING UP TO THE AMBASSADOR'S DEATH.

Q. THE KABUL RADIO ACCOUNT SAYS THAT THE KIDNAPPERS KILLED THE AMBASSADOR OR SHOT THE AMBASSADOR. IT IMPLIES THAT.

Q. I'M NOT SAYING NO. WE DON'T KNOW.

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Q. YOU HAVE NO INFORMATION AS TO WHOSE BULLETS OR EXACTLY WHAT HAPPENED?

A. NO, WE DON'T.

Q. WHAT ABOUT THE NATURE OF THE PEOPLE THAT KIDNAPPED THE AMBASSADOR?

A. AGAIN, I DON'T HAVE ANY INDEPENDENT INFORMATION ON THIS.

Q. YOU'RE NOT ABLE TO CONFIRM THAT THESE WERE SHI'ITES PROTESTING?

A. I'M NOT ABLE AT THIS POINT TO CONFIRM IT. THAT WAS AN INITIAL REPORT THAT WE HAD.

Q. WHERE ARE THEY COMING FROM, WHERE DID THOSE REPORTS ORIGINATE?

A. THEY ARE COMING OUT OF AFGHANISTAN.

Q. DID THEY COME FROM THE EMBASSY ORIGINALLY AND NOW THEY'RE PULLING BACK ON IT?

A. WE SIMPLY HAVE HAD A NUMBER OF FRAGMENTARY REPORTS. WE ARE ASKING FOR A FULL REPORT, AND IT WOULD BE A LOT

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HAPPIER ABOUT TRYING TO IDENTIFY FOLK WHEN WE GET IT.

Q. FOR THE RECORD, COULD YOU STATE WHAT THE POLICY OF THIS GOVERNMENT IS TOWARD THE QUESTION OF NEGOTIATING WITH TERRORISTS WHO TAKE HOSTAGES IN DEMANDING CERTAIN ACTS BE TAKEN?

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A. YES. I'LL GIVE IT TO YOU FOR THE RECORD, BUT I'M GOING TO TAKE THE QUESTION TO GE IT BECAUSE I DON'T WANT TO TRY TO WING IT.

Q. ARE THERE ANY PLANS TO GO BEYOND THE PROTESTS LIKE SUSPENDING RELATIONS, LEAVING THE POST VACANT, FREEZING RELATIONS, WHATEVER?

A. I SIMPLY AM NOT INFORMED OF ANY PLANS.

Q. WHAT DO YOU MEAN BY A PROTEST "IN THE STRONGEST TERMS"?

A. THAT MEANS IT WAS A VERY STRONG PROTEST.

Q. WHEN WE ASKED THE AFGHANIS NOT TO RUSH THE HOTEL, WAS THERE A RESPONSE? DID THEY SAY THEY WOULD NOT?

A. I SAID NO TO THAT. I ALSO SAID NO, THEY DIDN'T GIVE US ADVANCED NOTICE WHEN THEY DID IT.

Q. WAS THERE AMERICAN EMBASSY PERSONNEL AT THE HOTEL AT THE TIME THE POLICE WENT IN?

A. I DON'T KNOW. I'LL TAKE THE QUESTION.

Q. IT SEEMS TO BE, FROM THE REPORTS, THERE WERE NO SECURITY PEOPLE WITH THE AMBASSADOR. IS THIS USUAL FOR AFGHANISTAN THAT WE DON'T HAVE A POLICE GUARD AS WE DO IN SOME OTHER PLACES?

A. LET ME TAKE THE QUESTION OF WHO WAS WITH HIM.

Q. WHAT KIND OF SECURITY PRECAUTIONS HAVE NOW BEEN TAKEN TO SAFEGUARD THE EMBASSY IN KABUL AND OTHER PERSONNEL?

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A. I DON'T KNOW. I DON'T HAVE A DESCRIPTION OF THE SPECIFIC ACTIONS THAT HAVE BEEN TAKEN. THEY HAVE BEEN PUT ON ALERT BY THE EVENT, OBVIOUSLY, AND INSTRUCTED TO TAKE PRECAUTIONS. THAT ORDINARILY MEANS NOT WANDERING ABOUT AND PAYING PARTICULAR ATTENTION.

Q. ARE YOU GOING TO CONDUCT ANY FORMAL INVESTIGATION ABOUT THE SECURITY MEASURES THAT WERE TAKEN IN BOTH PLACES BEFORE THE ATTACKS?

A. WE ARE GOING TO EXAMINE WHAT HAPPENED IN BOTH CASES.

Q. ISN'T THERE A PRECEDURE IN THE DEPARTMENT TO INVESTIGATE FORMALLY SUCH CASES?

I'M SURE THAT THERE WILL BE A FORMAL LOOKING INTO A. I'M SURE THAT THERE WILL BE A FORMAL LOOKING INTO BOTH SETS OF EVENTS. I DON'T KNOW THE ANSWER TO YOUR QUESTION. I'LL BE GLAD TO TAKE IT, WHETHER IT IS SOMETHING THAT IS AUTOMATICALLY TRIGGERED OR SOMETHING THAT YOU LET EVENTS DICTATE.

Q. IS IT STILL YOUR BELIEF THAT THESE TWO INCIDENTS, IRAN AND AFGHANISTAN, WERE TOTALLY COINCIDENTAL?

A. BASED ON THE INFORMATION THAT WE NOW HAVE AVAILABLE -- WHICH I WILL NOT HAVE A QUALM IN THE WORLD OF REPUDIATING LATER WHEN WE HAVE MORE INFORMATION -- WE DO NOT SEE A LINK.

Q. WHICH WAS FIRST?

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A. AFGHANISTAN WAS FIRST.

Q. AND YOU DON'T THINK NEWS REPORTS OR OTHER KINDS OF REPORTS OF THAT COULD HAVE TRIGGERED THE SECOND?

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A. IF YOU MEAN THAT KIND OF LINK, I'M NOT ABLE TO SPECULATE ON THAT AT ALL. I THOUGHT YOU MEANT IN A MORE CONSPIRATORIAL WAY.

Q. WHAT WAS THE CHRONOLOGY ON THE AFGHAN INFORMATION? THE EMBASSY HAD SENT IN A MESSAGE ABOUT MIDNIGHT OUR TIME?

A. YES.

GEORGE, DO YOU HAVE THAT, BECAUSE YOU WERE RUNNING IT THROUGH WITH ME AND I CAN'T REMEMBER IT..

MR. SHERMAN: THE FIRST REPORT WAS RECEIVED SHORTLY BEFORE ONE O'CLOCK OUR TIME, AS I RECALL.

MR. CARTER: THE SECRETARY CAME INTO THE BUILDING SOON THEREAFTER.

MR. SHERMAN: THE SECRETARY WAS INVOLVED FROM THE BEGINNING.

Q. STAYING ON AFGHANISTAN, THERE IS SOMETHING I DON'T QUITE UNDERSTAND. WAS THERE EVER ANY CONTACT BETWEEN U.S. PERSONNEL AND THE ABDUCTORS, OR WAS THERE ONLY CONTACT BETWEEN THE OTHER EMBASSY PERSONNEL AND THE AFGHAN AUTHORITIES?

A. TO THE BEST OF MY INFORMATION, BETWEEN OUR EMBASSY PERSONNEL AND THE AFGHAN AUTHORITIES.
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Q. WERE YOU AWARE OF ANY CONTACT BETWEEN THE AFGHAN AUTHORITIES AND THE ABDUCTORS?

A. YES. AS I SAID IN MY OPENING STATEMENT, IT IS OUR UNDERSTANDING THAT THEY DID HAVE CONVERSATION WITH THE ABDUCTORS.

Q. JUST FOR THE RECORD, THE OFFICIAL AFGHAN STATEMENT SAYS THAT THEY RUSHED THE HOTEL ROOM WHEN THEY WERE GIVEN

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Q. WAIT A MINUTE. YOU SEEM TO BE GETTING INTO A CHICKEN-AND-THE-EGG SITUATION.

A. WHAT'S THE DIFFERENCE? I DON'T SEE WHAT THE PROBLEM IS. IT IS ACTING UNDER HIS GENERAL INSTRUCTIONS. THE SECRETARY OF STATE IS RESPONSIBLE FOR WHAT EMBASSY PEOPLE DO. HE IS RESPONSIBLE FOR WHAT OCCURRED THERE. HE IS RESPONSIBLE FOR THE PROTEST. THAT IS A STATEMENT OF FACT.

Q. WHEN YOU SAY "QUICKLY THEREAFTER," DOES THAT MEAN A MATTER OF MINUTES, OR HOURS?

A. I'LL GET YOU THE TIME. I DON'T KNOW.

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Q. AGAIN JUST FOR THE RECORD, HODDING, WAS THERE A FORMAL EXPRESSION OF REGRET OF ANY KIND OR ANYTHING ABOUT WHAT THE AFGHANS HAVE BEEN SAYING ABOUT THAT?

A. I THINK WE HAVE SEEN SOMETHING ON THAT, BUT IT HAS BEEN ON THE WIRE. I DON'T KNOW THAT WE HAVE HAD A FORMAL ONE. I HAVE NOT SEEN IT.

Q. BACK ON IRAN, WHAT IS THE NUMBER OF PERSONNEL AT THE AMERICAN EMBASSY IN TEHRAN?

A. THERE WERE SEVENTY ROUGHLY, IN THE EMBASSY COMPOUND.

Q. IS IT THE U.S. POLICY NOT TO DEAL WITH UNRECOGNIZED GOVERNMENTS DIRECTLY IN EMERGENCY SITUATIONS LIKE THE GOVERNMENT OF IRAN?

A. WE DEAL WITH A NUMBER OF GOVERNMENTS AND YOU CAN RECALL THE WAYS WE HAVE DONE IT. WE HAVE HAD PEOPLE DEAL WITH PEOPLE IN ANGOLA AND VIETNAM.

Q. WOULD YOU SAY THAT THERE IS A DIRECT CONTACT RIGHT NOW BETWEEN YOU AND THE IRANIAN GOVERNMENT?

A. WE ARE IN CONTACT WITH THAT GOVERNMENT.

Q. DIRECTLY?

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A. WITH THAT GOVERNMENT. THE ANSWER IS YES.

Q. DO YOU HAVE ANY OTHER ISSUES?

Q. JUST A BRIEF MIDDLE EAST THING. THE SECRETARY OF DEFENSE TODAY HAD A TOUR, I BELIEVE, OF THE OCCUPIED
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WEST BANK TERRITORIES UNDER THE GUIDANCE OF AN ISRAELI MILITARY OFFICIAL. DOES THAT REPRESENT A CHANGE IN PROCEDURE OF POLICY? TO HAVE A U.S. HIGH RANKING OFFICIAL VISIT OCCUPIED TERRITORY UNDER SUCH AUSPICES? OR HAS THIS OCCURRED IN THE PAST?

A. SECRETARY BROWN'S TOUR OF THE WEST BANK DOES NOT REPRESENT A CHANGE IN OUR POLICY. THE PURPOSE OF THE TOUR WAS TO UNDERSTAND BETTER THE SECURITY QUESTIONS THAT WILL ARISE IN CONNECTION WITH THE IMPLEMENTATION OF THE CAMP DAVID FRAMEWORKS. WE FELT IT WAS NECESSARY FOR US TO HAVE A DIRECT AND INDEPTH APPRECIATION OF THE TERRAIN OF THE AREA AND ITS RELATION TO SECURITY MATTERS. THAT WAS THE PURPOSE OF SECRETARY BROWN'S TOUR OF THE WEST BANK, WHICH WAS CONDUCTED PRIMARILY FROM THE AIR WITH ONE OR TWO BRIEF LANDINGS FOR TERRAIN APPRECIATION.

Q. IS IT A CHANGE IN PROCEDURE?

A. I AM NOT AWARE OF SOMETHING HAVING BEEN DONE PRECISELY LIKE THAT BEFORE.

Q. DID THE UNITED STATES ASK FOR REPRESSED PRESS COVERAGE OF THIS VISIT? THERE WERE REPORTS FROM ISRAEL THAT A POOL COVERAGE OF JOURNALISTS AND PHOTOGRAPHERS WERE CANCELLED, I THINK BY UNITED STATES REQUEST.

A. I DON'T HAVE ANY COMMENT ON THOSE REPORTS.

Q. ACTION BY THE ISRAELI GOVERNMENT?

A. I DON'T HAVE ANY COMMENT ON THOSE REPORTS EITHER. I DON'T HAVE ANY COMMENT ON ANY COMMENTS THAT FOREIGN MINISTER DAYAN OR PRIME MINISTER BEGIN ARE MAKING EITHER.
CHRISTOPHER

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